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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEB. 20, 1865.—Read first and second times, and ordered to be printed.

[By Mr. PERKINS, from Committee of Foreign Affairs.]

JOINT RESOLUTIONS

Expressing the sense of Congress on the subject of the late Peace Commission.

1 Whereas the Congress of the Confederate States have ever
2 been desirous of an honorable and a permanent settlement, by
3 negotiation, of all matters of difference between the people of
4 the Confederate States of America and the government of the
5 United States, and to this end provided, immediately on its as-
6 sembling at Montgomery in February 1861, for the sending of
7 three commissioners to Washington to negotiate friendly rela-
8 tions on all questions of disagreement between the two govern-
9 ments on principles of right, justice, equity and good faith: And
10 whereas these having been refused a reception, Congress again,
11 on the 14th of June 1864, adopted and published a manifesto to
12 the civilized world, declaring its continued desire to settle with-
13 out further shedding of blood, upon honorable terms, all ques-
14 tions at issue between the people of the Confederate States and
15 those of the United States, to which the only response received
16 from the Congress of the United States has been the voting down,

17 by large majorities, all resolutions proposing an amicable settle-
 18 ment of existing difficulties : And whereas the President has
 19 communicated to this House, that in the same spirit of concilia-
 20 tion and peace, he recently sent Vice-President Stephens, Sena-
 21 tor Hunter and Judge Campbell, to hold conference with such
 22 persons as the government of the United States might designate
 23 to meet them : And whereas those eminent citizens, after a full
 24 conference with President Lincoln and Secretary Seward, have
 25 reported that they were informed explicitly that the authorities
 26 of the United States would hold no negotiation with the Con-
 27 federate States, or any of them separately ; that no terms, except
 28 such as a conqueror grants to the subjugated, would be extended
 29 to the people of these states ; and that the subversion of our
 30 institutions, and a complete submission to their rule, was the
 31 only condition of peace : Therefore,

1 Resolved by the Congress of the Confederate States of Ame-
 2 rica, That while Congress regrets that no alternative is left to
 3 the people of the Confederate States but a continuance of the
 4 war, or submission to terms of peace alike ruinous and dishonor-
 5 able, it accepts, in their behalf, the issue tendered them by the
 6 authorities of the United States government, and solemnly de-
 7 clares that it is their unalterable determination to prosecute the
 8 war with the United States until that power shall desist from
 9 its efforts to subjugate them, and the independence of the Con-
 10 federate States shall have been established.

1 Resolved, That the Congress has received with pride the nu-
2 merous noble and patriotic resolutions passed by the army; and
3 in the gallant and unconquered spirit which they breathe,
4 coming from those who have for years endured dangers and pri-
5 vations, it sees unmistakable evidence that the enthusiasm with
6 which they first dedicated their lives to the defence of their
7 country is not yet extinct, but has been confirmed, by hardships
8 and suffering, into a principle of resistance to northern rule,
9 that will hold in contempt all disgraceful terms of submission;
10 and for these expressions in camp, as well as for their noble
11 acts in the field, our soldiers deserve, and will receive the
12 thanks of the country.

1 Resolved, That the Congress invites the people of these States
2 to assemble in public meetings, and renew their vows of devo-
3 tion to the cause of independence; to declare their determi-
4 nation to maintain their liberties; to pledge themselves to do
5 all in their power to fill the ranks of our army; and to provide
6 for the support of the families of our soldiers; and to cheer and
7 comfort, by every means, the gallant men who for years, through
8 trials and dangers, have vindicated our rights on the battle field.

1 Resolved, That, confiding in the justice of our cause, aided
2 and sustained by the God of battles; in the valor and endurance
3 of our soldiers, and in the deep and ardent devotion of our
4 people to the great principles of civil and political liberty, for
5 which we are contending, Congress pledges itself to the passage
6 of the most energetic measures, to secure our ultimate success.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GILMER.

1 Resolved further, that notwithstanding all this, we believe
2 that the Confederate States would consent and agree to the
3 following :

1 1st. That there be a separation between the United States of
2 America and the Confederate States of America—each one per-
3 fectly free and independent of the other ; the rights of naviga-
4 tion, trade, transit, &c. properly and fairly agreed on and settled.

1 2d. That an American Diet be created, to which each party
2 shall be at liberty to send Delegates, each being its own judge
3 as to the number and manner of electing them, and each party
4 paying all its own expenses.

1 3d. The privileges of this Diet to be clearly and definitely
2 defined and settled.

1 4th. In this Diet there shall be but two votes—one by the
2 Delegates of the United States of America, and one by the
3 Delegates of the Confederate States of America ; and the acts
4 of this body to be binding on the parties only when ratified by
5 the House, Senate and President of each.

1 5th. In settling the boundary, let the States of Kentucky and
2 Missouri determine for themselves, by a free and fair vote of
3 their people, bona fide resident in their respective States at the
4 commencement of hostilities.

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